

## MUSIC IS BETTER THAN MEDICINE

Facis About the Curative Properties of Harmonious Sounds.

### SOME INTERESTING EXPERIMENTS

Music Sure to Play an Important Part in the Medical Practice of the Future--What Has Already Been Accomplished in This Direction.

From Music.

A great deal of attention has lately been given to music as a therapeutic agent. Indeed, the "experiments" in this direction of scientists, physicians, mesmerists and nondescript of various kinds are becoming somewhat confusing. One experimenter has discovered that music incites the action of the heart and that this action influences the circulation of the blood, causing it to coincide with the changes in the breathing. Another says that the functional activity of the skin is powerfully stimulated by music, while Prof. Czetzolma of Naples recalls a demonstration given by Charcot at the Salpêtrière of the benefit derived from music by a selected group of his patients, all suffering from neuroses of varying degrees of intensity. That distinguished physiologist, Prof. Jachmann of St. Petersburg has found that "if the fingers are completely fatigued, either by voluntary effort or by electric excitation, music has the power of making the fatigue disappear," a very doubtful "experiment," seeing that the fingers of the pianist are quite as liable to become fatigued as the fingers of other people who seldom hear a note of music.

Again, there are the interesting experiments of Dr. Warthin, of Vicuña, in the way of hypnotizing patients and dosing them with music while in a state of trance. These experiments seem to show pretty conclusively that the man without music in his soul does not really exist. The doctor's subjects were five men and two women who were almost entirely unaffected by music when in their normal state. Before hypnotizing them, Dr. Warthin "suggested" to them the will to preserve their impressions after having awakened. One of the subjects, aged forty, had Wagner's "Walküre" played to him. His pulse immediately became stronger and more rapid. The tension was increased by 60 and the beats advanced to 120. Similar results were obtained with the other subjects. The subject declared that he had not been sensible to the music as a sound, but only as a general sensation, a sort of excitement like that produced by a rapid flight through space." Dr. Warthin states that he has found nothing so effective as music in hypnotizing refractory subjects. One such subject remained insensible to everything but the pilgrim's chorus in "Tannhäuser" when this was played he usually succumbed about the fifth bar. There is then hope for the eternity of Wagner's fame yet! In the way of further "experiments" we have to note the existence in London of the so-called Guild of St. Cecilia, which seeks to charm away pain and induce sleep by the soothing strains of music, and even contemplates, or did contemplate, a mission of mercy by telephonic aid. Further, we have the announcement that music is being more and more systematically employed in our lunatic asylums, and that the medical profession in general are gradually coming

to recognize it as an agent in the cure or alleviation of various of the ills that flesh is heir to.

### NOT A NOVELTY.

Now, interesting as it is to note all these developments, the fact remains that here is nothing very new about this recognition of the curative powers of music. That certain physical pains might be alleviated by the Greeks and Romans, and the circumstances that bodily and mental disease may be effected in more or less degree by music has been a subject of remark with scientific writers of all nations from Aristotle and Euclid down to Rousseau and Buffon. Look for a moment at the ancient classics. In the "Meditation" of Euripides the nurse expresses her surprise to the chorus that music instead of being composed merely for feasts and banquets, should not equally have had a medical application to such maladies as that of her mistress, a passage, by the way, rendered finely by the author of "The Pleasures of Hope." You will find Cleo asserting the amazing power of music over many diseases, and Plato supporting him with the suggestion that harmony effects the mind just as air effects the body.

Plutarch tells us that Thelates, the Cretan, delivered the Lacedæmonians from the pestilence by the music of his lyre; while Marianne-Capella assures us that he knew of fevers being brought about by music, and that Esculapides cured deafness by the sound of a trumpet, another rather doubtful experiment. Pythagoras and Xenocrates brought banquets to their pupils by melodious sounds; according to the old historian, Suidas, Timotheus the Great by his flute playing that he "suddenly rose from the table and seized his weapons," whether to deal destruction on Timotheus or otherwise we are not informed; Perhaps Alexander had too much wine, and the flutist played as he might easily be made furious. The story reminds one of the case of Henry IV. of Denmark, cited by Krafft-Henry had been told of a certain musician who boasted that he could "either vex or please those who heard his music and either lay them asleep or put them into a rage." He should certainly have begun by slaying the musician. On the other hand, it is interesting to note what Aristotle tells about the "Tyrhenians, that they never scourged their slaves without at the same time giving them a "counterpoise" to the pain by a course of flute music. The mythology of Greece tells of Chiron, who with the help of music not only cured the sick, but also softened the fits of anger of his charge, the famous Achilles; while Thales, acting on the authority of a neighboring oracle who seems to have had great weight in the consulting world, cured a raging plague in Sparta by it. Aulus Gellius, Athenus, Celsus, Aretinus, Theophrastus, all availed themselves of music to calm the sufferings caused by neuralgia, sciatica and gout. Celsus actually advises recurrence to the Physician made in case of those weighed down by melancholia, while for raging lunatics he would prescribe the flute mode. Some of these ancient "cures" are no doubt apocryphal, but there are others we need not question, any more than we question the softening of Socrates' anger by the music of David's harp.

But we are not dependent solely upon the old classics for facts to show that music hath charms to soothe the savage and the sickly. Indeed, any one who looks into the subject with some minuteness will be surprised at the amount of writing that exists in connection with it. The indefatigable Barney has dealt with the matter very fully, and has collected the testimonies of several historians and the opinions of many physicians. Richard Eastcott in his "Sketches of the Origin and

Progress of Music," published in 1782, also devotes a large amount of space to it. Eastcott's experience it may, however, be remarked, were not uniformly in favor of the poet's contention that "Music can soften pain to ease, and make despair and madness please." For example, he recounts the case of several men who fainted upon hearing certain kinds of music. One man was taken to the opera, but the opera was Arnes's "Artaxerxes," and one does not wonder that a man fainted after hearing the overture of that deadly dull work. It is Eastcott again who tells the story of a Mr. Burton, a "celebrated chorus singer," who fainted at the Handel commemorative services in Westminster Abbey. The overture to Esther so violently agitated this gentleman that after lying in a swoon for some time he expired. "At intervals he was able to speak, and only a few minutes before breathing his last he declared that it was the wonderful effect of the music which had thus fatally operated on him." There is no reason to doubt the genuineness of this or for several other cases of the kind are on record.

### SENSITIVE NERVES.

There is a man upon whose nervous system it so acted that he was obliged to leave the room previous to music being introduced. This man made two final experiments in hope of overcoming the weakness, but both ended in his being seized with a convulsion in the jaw, greatly to the alarm of his friends. Mrs. Mathews, in like manner, now and again suffered intensely from the effect of music. For example, when she heard Beethoven's C minor symphony for the first time at the Paris conservatory, she was seized with such convulsions that she had to be carried out of the room. Rousseau says he heard of a woman who heard any kind of music without being seized with involuntary and convulsive laughter. In Gaillard's "Life of Charlemagne" we are told of a woman who when she heard an organ for the first time, was so transported with rapture that she never recovered from the effect, and died in consequence, which is not a bad testimony to the organs of Charlemagne's time. We all know that each time the bagpiper of the Hartz plays a maiden dies, and a charming legend, which, in like manner, must not be taken as pointing to a want of veracity, tells us of a death which was attributed to a neighboring band. If the story is true no doubt the band was a brass one.

There is a much quoted anecdote about Mozart fainting away at the sound of a trumpet, an instrument of which, up to the age of 10, he had the greatest dread. "He could not bear the trumpet," says Holmes, in his life of the composer, when blown by itself, and was alarmed to see it even handled. His father, thinking to remove this childish fear, desired that it should be blown before him, notwithstanding all his entreaties to the contrary. At the first blast he turned pale and sank to the ground, and serious consequences might have ensued had the experiment been persisted in. Mozart at any rate seems to have got pretty quickly over his dislike for the trumpet, for in the catalogue of his works produced between his seventh and twelfth years the instrument figures frequently. There is no doubt, however, that with some excitable natures music, from being at first a voluptuous enjoyment, soon degenerates into an acute sense of suffering. Berlioz was a witness to this in his own person; and in one of his works he has described his feelings in a very expressive way. To the sensation of pleasure he says succeeded a general excitation, a greater activity of circulation, of leading the arteries vessels of the head, an outburst of tears, spasmodic and tetanic contractions of the muscles, a tremor in all the limbs, a progressive stiffening of the extremities, swimming in the head, an approach to syncope, a crisis completely

hysterical. This state of being was surely remarkable enough in one who had to make his living by music; but perhaps it depended to some extent upon the kind of music which he heard. A course of Berlioz himself has been known to produce feelings of restlessness and inquietude in some minds; a surfeit of Schumann might make certain people morbid; and it is possible that the cloying sweetness of Chopin might tend to voluptuousness in some individuals. Shakespeare certainly seems to recognize this fact. The senescent Cleopatra calls music "the moody food of love," and the duke's words in "Measure for Measure" are very explicit on the point:

Music hath such a charm  
To make bad good and good provoke to harm.

### AMONG MEDICAL WRITERS.

The return, however, to our main theme. We were speaking of the great amount of attention given by writers and physicians at various times to the question of medicinal music. There is a medical treatise written by a Spanish lady as far back as the time of Elizabeth, in which music is represented as "that which tends most to comfort, rejoice and strengthen the brain, and as a disarmer of epilepsy." There is an anonymous pamphlet, of date 1749, entitled "Reflections of Ancient and Modern Music, with the Availing of the cure of the disease," which, however, I have not seen. Twenty years before this certain Richard Brown, "an apothecary of Oldham," had published a book "On the Effects of Singing, Music and Dancing on Human Bodies." The specialty of this work is its recommendation of the exercise of singing as useful in certain disorders. In discussing this point, the author lays down a number of propositions beginning, "There is a sympathy between the sense and the animal spirits, and going on to assert that animal spirits regulate the action of the heart; that the pressure of air in the lungs, caused by singing, more effectually removes deleterious matter from the blood, and so on. "The singing of certain melancholy, languishing tunes, continues the sense and the animal spirits, and elevating the spirits, rather tend to their depression, and, therefore, in order to enjoy the pleasing and profitable effect that I have proposed in singing, we are to make choice of such tunes as, having life and vigor in their composition, are adapted to cheer and soothe the soul, and bring a languishing motion of the spirit." Apart from the good effects of singing upon the singer, this old writer especially recommends music as helpful in attacks of the "spleen or vapors." Where a soft adagio, according to Mr. Brower, would be "very improper, as by its melodious strains it only tends to soothe our melancholy and bring a languishing upon the spirits that are already drooping," the author pins his faith to a "brisk allegro," which he proclaims to be "prodigious service in the cure of apoplexies, lethargies, etc." Their C. C. Collins, it is understood, put their trust in soft and gentle strains. They must take care not to bring a languishing upon the spirit, though the patient may prefer it to any results derived from the "airy, sprightly strains of an allegro."

Mr. Barrett, an eminent physician who made the music of the ancients his particular study, was of the opinion that music has the power of affecting the whole nervous system, so as to give a temporary relief in certain diseases; and Jacques Bonnet in his "Histoire de la Musique," (1755) tells us how on one occasion he was entertained by a friend then in the service of the Prince of Orange, with the performance of three first rate musicians, who were constantly employed by the prince to keep him free from melancholy. The same remedy, it may be remembered, was used by Philip V. of Spain, when, as the result of bereavement, he fell into a state of melancholia. The queen got Farinella to sing regularly to him, and as a result his health was very soon restored. Moreover, Ferdinand VI. inherited this same melancholia from his father, Philip, and was also cured in a like manner. Apropos of all this, old Burton, when he penned his "Anatomy of Melancholy," was not likely to forget music as a potent remedy for that too impracticable malady; but he also cites the relief afforded by it in the hands of the physician to many "frantic persons," and tells how Clinias and Empedocles "cured some desperately melancholy and some mad" by the same means. It is with him "a sovereign remedy" and one that will "drive away the devil himself." This driving away the devil, by the way, was a special object of ambition with Luther, and it is curious to find that he also recommended music as being specially fitted for the purpose. "The devil," says the reformer, "is a sturdiest spirit and music is hateful to him and drives him far away from it." It is a countryman of Luther's upon whom Southey drops a passing note of admiration for that he, a physician, "administered cat's claws as a panacea." We know that catgut is quite innocent of any connection with the bowels of the domestic feline, but Southey's meaning is plain, and Luther would almost certainly have approved the remedy. Milton recommended musical exercises before meat as a relief to the mind, and advised it after meat "to assist and cherish nature in her first concoctions, and send the mind back to study in good time and satisfaction." And Milton practiced what he preached, for in the account of his day's occupation we find that his custom was after dinner to "play on the organ and sing or hear another sing." Douglas Jerrold declared that he hated to dine amidst the strains of a military band; he said he could taste the brass in his soup. But perhaps he would have had no objection to music of a quiet type such as allison evidently advocated.

### IN ANCIENT GERMANY.

The German magistrates of olden times used to hire musicians to play "lusty companions" to "trip the light fantastic toe" with those afflicted with St. Vitus's dance. At the outbreak of epidemics, too, they would call in the aid of the leading musicians in order to lessen to some extent the horror and fear which were spread everywhere, and which of themselves often brought on the disease. Even the deadly bite of the tarantula was indirectly rendered innocuous by the power of music. The great thing was to keep the patient awake, for if he went to sleep before the poison was extracted he was sure to be a dead man in no time, and so the music was chosen, and of a peculiarly exhilarating kind, to throw the hapless wight into a violent fit of dancing which brought on a plentiful perspiration and thus effected a cure. One may be surgical on the matter of efficacy; but at least we know that the "Tarantella" survives, and that several of our best composers have written in the form and character of the old dance tune. The last movement of Weber's sonata in E minor is a masterpiece of the kind. Even at the present time music is regarded by some semi-civilized natives as a medical agent. It is nearly always used in those countries where there is a general belief that sickness is produced by the malignant influence of evil spirits, the notion being the Lutheran one that music drives those spirits away.

As a cure for insanity, music has been in more or less repute from the earliest times. Shakespeare alludes to it in Richard III., where the king says: "His music made me let sound no more, for though it be his madmen to his wit, to me it seems it will make wise men mad."

### LATER INSTANCES.

We all remember the case of the late eccentric King of Bavaria, who, when suffering from one of his periodical headaches, used to call for Nachbaur to sing the dream song from "Masaniello" and Stradella's "Prayer," both

of which had usually a soothing effect upon his majesty. Maimzer, in his "Music and Education," records the case of a woman in a Glasgow asylum who from hearing an old Scotch song one evening had the faculty of memory aroused and gradually came to such a clear understanding that she could be restored to her friends. A touching story of a somewhat kindred kind appeared not long ago in the Philadelphia Record. The Record states that in the Philadelphia hospital's insane department successful results have followed the treatment of diseased minds by a mild application of the cause of the trouble. A teacher of music some time ago became insane and was taken to the hospital. The treatment was tried on him and he was daily taken upon the piano. "His hands were placed upon the keys, only to wander over them blindly and without the slightest indication of skill. He would often turn away his head, and when forced to look upon the instrument that had once been his companion and pride, it was with disgust. Perseverance, however, prevailed upon kindly tuition, and in a few days his eyes became filled with their old fire. His fingers no longer wandered aimlessly over the keyboard, but, as though realizing he had found a lost friend, began playing with all the pent-up passion of a soul that had just been liberated from some horrible thrall. For several minutes he played as one in a dream, and then his head fell on his breast and he wept like a child." That man is today perfectly sane. It is said that the usual effect of music upon a deluded patient would be to make him susceptible to the influence of suggestion, and thus enable the doctor to fix his attention. It is suggested, too, that by calling forth some reaction, music would assist the physician in diagnosing between stupor and melancholia and anergic stupor. Any experiments of that kind would certainly be watched not only by medical scientists, but by musicians with due attention. On the whole, it would seem that music is to form a very important function in the medical world of the future.

### Gloomy Lot of Names.

Much to the surprise of Proprietor Hurst, of the Hurst hotel, says the St. Louis Republic, one of his regular boarders walked up to the desk yesterday morning, paid his bill, and announced his intention of leaving. Mr. Hurst solicitously inquired the reason. If there had been any inattention Mr. Hurst assured his guest he would see that it was remedied. "Well," said the guest, "it may seem foolish to you, Hurst, but I have a reason for leaving. I have nothing against the hotel, I think it is the nicest place to live in I ever saw. But you know I am superstitious, and my superstition is all that is taking me away."

"It is customary with me, as you know, to take a few drinks through the day. I go into your saloon and I find that the name of the man who manages it is Jerry. This in itself doesn't amount to anything, but his assistant is named Graves. Of course the fact wouldn't cut any particular amount of ice with you, but it does with me, especially when I find that you have a night clerk named Coffin, and then you have a porter named Ginn, and a chambermaid named Vitriol, to say nothing of a bell boy named Scoundrel and an elevator boy named Sexton. Taken in connection with the name of the place, which can be easily mislabeled for 'Hearse,' there is too much around here to suggest a funeral to suit me. Hurst--too much to suggest a funeral."

And then the superstitious man departed, and Mr. Hurst thought long and deeply. There will be some loose hotel lads in town about Saturday.

### A Modern Miracle.

He dropped a match from the bridge and it lit on the water.--Judge.

## HESITATE NO LONGER.

Modesty in women is natural. It is one of women's chief charms. No one cares for one who really lacks this essential to womanliness.

Women have suffered fearfully because of over-sensitiveness in this direction. They couldn't say to the physician what they ought to say to someone.

Mrs. Pinkham has received the confidence of thousands.

Women open their hearts to her. She understands their suffering, and has the power to relieve and cure.

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You ask how she can tell if the doctor cannot? Because no man living ever treated so many cases and possesses such vast experience.

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Lydia E. Pinkham's "Vegetable Compound" is the sure cure for this trouble. For twenty years it has done its grand work and cured thousands.

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From His Portland Speech.

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And if she can, why should we want to do it? Suppose you have got a house; is it worth any more, is it any different house, whether it is worth 2,000 silver half dollars of 1,000 whole dollars? (Applause.) If you want to count your house at more dollars why not cut the gold dollars in two and measure it by gold?

Are there any more potatoes in four thousand bushels than there are in a thousand bushels? If I remember my arithmetic aright, and perhaps I don't, your house is the same, your farm is the same, it produces the same result.

DR. DIX'S Celebrated Female Powders never fail. 1000 ladies declare that such and such a cure was obtained by using them. Particulars 4 cents. 1000 St. N. York, New York, Boston, Mass.

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